

**For Immediate Release**

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**HERSETH SANDLIN JOINS PRESIDENT FOR SIGNING OF LEGISLATION TO ENSURE  
TIMELY FUNDING FOR VA HEALTH CARE**

***Legislation authorizes Congress to approve appropriations for VA health care accounts  
one year in advance***

**Washington, DC {October 22, 2009}-** Today, Rep. Herseth Sandlin joined President Obama at the White House as he signed into law the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act. Rep. Herseth Sandlin was an original cosponsor of this legislation, which authorizes Congress to approve appropriations for VA health care accounts one year in advance of the start of each fiscal year, ensuring important resources are not affected by legislative delays in the budget process. This will provide the VA with sufficient time to plan how best to deliver the efficient and effective care to an increasing number of veterans with increasingly complex medical conditions. And importantly, it will mean that critical health benefits for veterans won't be held up by yearly budget fights.

"As a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have been concerned that services offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs to our nation's veterans are often imperiled due to Congressional delays in passing the yearly appropriations legislation," Rep. Herseth Sandlin said. "The needs of our veterans are simply too important to get caught up in these yearly fights and that's why I have consistently supported proposals to provide advanced appropriations for VA health care. I am very proud to join the President today to enact a law that will improve the lives of veterans."

Advanced appropriations for VA health care is also the top legislative priority of several veterans service organizations. A group comprised of nine veteran organizations called Partnership for Veteran Health Care Budget Reform called the vote in the Veterans' Affairs Committee on this measure "among the most important for veterans and their families that the Committee will take this year." This is a partnership that includes groups such as the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America and the VFW.

"Those who have bravely served our country in uniform deserve to be protected as best we know how – not just with armaments, equipment, training and support while in service – but also

with essential services when they become veterans, not the least of which is access to top-notch health care," Rep. Herseth Sandlin said. "By providing this funding in advance, we ensure that critical resources necessary to meet veterans' needs aren't beholden to politically-motivated legislative delays and, ultimately, veterans will receive the care they need and deserve in a timely manner."

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